THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The less than estimated sugar production in the country during the last sugar season 2008-09 and the anticipated low production of sugar during the current sugar season 2009-10 has led to escalation in sugar prices. The Government has taken a slew of measures to augment availability of sugar and to moderate sugar prices. The details of these measures are given in the enclosed Statement [Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to USQ No. 174 Part (c)]

(c) The Government closely monitors production, demand and supply of sugar and takes necessary steps to ensure adequate availability of sugar in the country. Soon after it became evident to the Government that production of sugar in 2008-09 sugar season was likely to be less than anticipated, it allowed import of raw sugar under Advance Authorization Scheme and thereafter import of white/refined sugar and raw sugar at zero duty under Open General License to augment domestic availability of sugar.

Stock of sugar

†191. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the balance stock of sugar by the end of September, 2009 in the country was 40 lakh tonnes;

(b) if not, the quantum of this stock;

(c) the quantum of sugar consumed in the sugar season 2008-09 (October to September) and break-up of the consumption between big sugar consumers and common retail consumers; and

(d) the quantum of production of sugar in the year, remaining sugar stock of 2007-08 and quantum of imported sugar in private and public sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The balance stock of sugar by the end of September, 2009 in the country is provisionally estimated to be about 25 lac tons. Besides, there is an estimated quantity of about 12.6 lac tons of imported raw sugar with various sugar mills and merchant importers as per trade sources.

(c) The consumption of sugar in the last sugar season 2008-09 (October to September) was estimated around 225 lac tons. The Government does not maintain data on consumption of big sugar consumers and common retail consumers. However, as per study conducted by KPMG (sponsored by Indian Sugar Exim Corporation), over 60% of non -levy sugar sold is consumed by big consumers.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(d) The production of sugar during the last sugar season 2008-09 is provisionally estimated at about 147 lac tons and the remaining stock from 2007-08 sugar season at about 100 lac tons. As per trade sources, the quantity of imported raw and white sugar in 2008-09 sugar season is 22.93 lac tons and 2.25 lac tons respectively.

Fresh identification of BPL beneficiaries

192. SHRI N.K. SINGH:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has asked States to put a cap on the number of BPL beneficiaries under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS);

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has also asked States to identify afresh the BPL population;

(d) whether the foodgrains presently allocated to States are based on 1993-94 poverty estimates; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the State Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (e) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), focused on the poor is operated under joint responsibility of Central and the State/UT Governments. The operational responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, issuance of ration cards to them, and supervision over and monitoring of functioning of fair price shops, rest with the concerned State and UT Governments.

Foodgrains are allocated to State & UTs under TPDS for 6.52 crore BPL families. This number of BPL families is based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000, and includes 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. However, as reported by end of October 2009, State and UT Governments have issued 10.96 crore BPL ration cards including 2.43 crore AAY cards. State/UT-wise details of these families are given in the enclosed Statement [Refer to the statement appended to the Answer to USQ No. 173 Part (a) to (e)]

The higher number of BPL ration cards issued by them is due to improper targeting of the poor households, and have inclusion as well as exclusion errors. Some of the State Governments have requested for accepting the higher numbers of BPL families for allocation of foodgrains under TPDS. The State and UT Governments have again been directed to take up a campaign during October to December 2009 to detect and eliminate bogus/ineligible BPL ration cards.